

423 (nizaa'a) belongs to Khalid Idris and his brothers. This
619 happened with the satisfaction of both tribes, and this re-
578 nunciation of claim is valid from today. This paper concern-
691 ing the ownership of land around the well is valid from today
also. And this happened between the parties: (Signatures or
stamps of both parties concerned.)

(There appeared the signatures of twenty-three of the twenty-
four men who were to have sworn the oath.)

Only twenty-three oath-takers were present: 30 July 1964.

I, Shaikh Khalid Za'aluk, agree on the signatures of only
twenty-three oath-takers. (Signature of Khalid Za'aluk.)

648 We have mentioned that the 'awaiyid prevails in al-
671 Qasr, but have also noted that where the security of the
578 desert is threatened the government is likely to intervene.
The government enters tribal conflict in al-Qasr with the tacit
approval of the Bedouins. As one informant remarked: "The
'awaiyid is the best way to handle problems, but the police
will handle what the 'awaiyid cannot."

423 Date: 1964. Case: Quarrel between al-Afrad ('Ali Abyad) and
691 'Aishaibat ('Ali Ahmar) over water rights. Many members of
578 both tribes took part in this conflict. The government had
619 to intervene: they formed a peace committee made up of all
648 the 'awaagil of both tribes and the 'umda and shaikh from
* [613] each tribe.
• [634]

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A tut in this rather wide sense of 'man of good standing,' or 'social leader' is usually a scion of an important lineage, the head of his own family, and master of his homestead and herd . . . (His) authority is never formalized. He has no defined status (i.e. specifically delimited position), powers, or sphere of leadership . . . Beyond his domestic groups a tut has authority in his village only in the sense that he takes a prominent part in questions of procedure and other discussions.

The non-institutionalized third party role in al-Qasr has power and influence in political affairs, and this condition arises from certain structural features and economic facts about Bedouin society. In a word, outside the lone formal role of 'agila', a person's political influence is directly related to the traditional influence which attaches to his family, or to his economic status. In all cases, the person of "good" family and sufficient wealth has a high status on the social prestige scale of al-Qasr. The people who have high esteem do not have prescribed roles to play in al-Qasr but their roles are indeed important. Furthermore, the rajal khair role can be just as important as any political role which is prescribed, and it may even become more important.

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Besides the 'agila' and the third party, there exists two external but related roles which form part of the total system of Bedouin authority. The roles of 'umda' and 'shaikh' represent institutionalized offices. They function, however, more as structural aspects of the Egyptian governmental authority structure. Of course, no complete separation between the two structures can be claimed. It is recognized

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[792] you for your cloak, you would have immediately given it to him. God was pleased with them at that time."

This notion of changing foci of authority and power cannot be divorced from the related political phenomena of the tendency toward legitimacy and the role institutionalization process. In the next chapter, I will attempt to show how such a conceptual framework can be utilized in an analysis of culture and political change.

Modern Legal Roles

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[177] The roles of 'umda and shaikh were created and imposed upon the Bedouins by Muhammad 'Ali sometime during the early part of the nineteenth century in order to facilitate administration, maintain security in the desert, and protect the Western frontier.

[619] Both of these roles are representative offices at the primary level of the tribal structure. The 'Aishaibat have an 'umda and a shaikh who reside in Marsa Matruh and work in close relation with the Governor. In terms of a chain of command, these offices receive demands which may originate either with the Governor in Matruh or with Bedouins in al-Qasr. But these offices are subservient to both the Governor and the Bedouins since no decision-making powers of any consequence

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[635] resides with them. With reference to the two authority structures, the Egyptian and the Bedouin, the 'umda and the

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[635] shaikh are administrators, not executives, in the service of the Governor and the "status group" of al-Qasr. Nevertheless, under the influence of the bureaucratic principle, as a new structural principle in Bedouin society, these offices could conceivably become seats of power.⁴

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571 The 'umda and shaikh are described as "elective" offices by the Bedouins but, in fact, they are appointive just like the office of 'aqila. Theoretically, every man has a vote but, actually, only the members of the "status group" vote.

Paradoxically, perhaps, the Bedouins stress two major qualifications for these offices: the 'umda and the shaikh must be men "who know the needs of the Bedouin of the desert, and know how to talk to the Governor"; and, "they must be men who do nothing without the permission of the 'awaaqil (i.e. without the permission of the "status group" who elected the 'aqila in the first place).

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554 The two offices are not equal in prestige and status neither in the eyes of the Bedouins or of the Egyptians. The office of shaikh is the lesser office. It amounts to a clerical post, and the shaikh really functions as an assistant

[635] ⁴ The Governor, who is of Bedouin origin, has already recognized this potential and has moved to eliminate the possibility of a more powerful 'umda representing a more powerful "status group." When I left the field, the Governor was in the process of drawing up new ground rules for electing the 'umda and the shaikh which would call for public elections on a "one man, one vote" basis.

634 to the 'umda. Both offices are for a life-term, only being
554 terminated by bad behavior or senility. At the expiration
634 of an incumbent's term, the "status group" meets in al-Qasr
571 to decide upon his replacement. The name of a "nominee"
635 is passed on to the Governor who is expected to approve the
666 Bedouins' selection of a representative to the government.

[178] It is this "status group"-controlled process which the
[177] Governor seeks to change. Since these are officially held
offices in the U.A.R. governmental structure, he feels that
elections to fill their vacancies should be a public affair.
Naturally, he will exercise more influence over the naming
of candidates in this way, and the Bedouins perceive this as
a challenge to the traditional structure of leadership and
control of external relations.

634 The offices of 'umda and shaikh are even more heredi-
*613 tary than that of 'aqila, which theoretically should not be
666 the case. By definition, the role of 'aqila is functional at
[428] the bait level, and so the recruitment pool of candidates
for this office is inherently limited. By comparison, the
offices of 'umda and shaikh should go to the "best men" in
the tribe, and, therefore, the recruitment pool should be

634 tribal-wide. But, in fact, these two offices are considered
*613 "the property" of the wealthiest lineages in the al-Qasr area.
666 There is a traditional rationale behind this fact: there is
428 the structural necessity for, and conscious practice of, an

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• 634 asymmetrical power relationship between commoners and "status
* 613 group" which maintains political order. The Bedouins say of
666 the 'umda's office, as they did of the 'aqila', "if the son is
428 worthy of the office, then he should take his father's place."
[571] Such a statement is usually qualified by noting that if the
son does not possess the qualifications of the office, of
course, he will not succeed. This is not simply a case of
power politics, there is more to it. Behind the inheritance
of the 'umda and shaikh office is a logical concern and
attempt to sustain a balance of political and social relations.

The "inheritance" of the 'aqila's office is explained
by showing that the candidates for the office are limited to
the brothers and sons of the incumbent, the former 'aqila.
The offices of 'umda and shaikh, in contrast, have a recruit-
ment pool which includes, potentially, every man at the primary
tribal level, the 'Aishaibat. The rule of succession, where
the modern legal roles are concerned, is a mechanism for
maintaining, what is considered by most Bedouins to be, the
legitimate distribution of power in al-Qasr. Once the roles
of 'umda and shaikh have been "captured" by a bait, for
political power resides at the tertiary level of the lineage
structure, any attempt to change the distribution or locus
of power will be culturally transformed into a threat to the
honor, not of the individual, but of his bait and 'aiela.
And this is a basis for conflict in Bedouin society. It is

• 634 no coincidence, then, that the present 'umda and shaikh are
* 613 the sons of the former 'umda and shaikh. This reveals not
666 only the structural rules of succession, but also indicates
428 that "social honor," and thus power, still resides with these
[578] families.

[178] It is important to note that since the time of their
inception, these roles have not changed 'aiela or even bait
in al-Qasr. When the former 'umda from 'Ailit Lazumi died,
634 his eldest son petitioned to the 'awaaqil of the 'Aishaibat
* 613 that he be approved to succeed to his father's position.
666 The 'awaaqil met and made their decision. One 'aqila who
428 was present at the election said: "The office of 'umda should
571 stay in the Lazumi family since the father was 'umda. The
'awaaqil agreed on the son. But the son will be accepted to
follow his father only if he is good. If he is not good, the
'awaaqil will find a new bait." Although the Bedouins speak
of "the 'awaaqil" electing the 'umda, it must be remembered
that it is the "status group" which makes the decision, and
that the 'awaaqil are only part of this group. The names of
[627] the men who elected the present 'umda include less 'awaaqil
and more rajal khair.

114 Before I arrived in the field, the present acting
634 'umda of the 'Aishaibat tribe was elected to the national
666 parliament to represent the province of Marsa Matruh. The
election of his replacement was not scheduled to take place

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* [613] until sometime after my departure from the field.⁵ Nevertheless, before I left the field I discussed the pending election with some of my informants and members of the "status group." The interviews reveal that the "status group" still intends to dominate the area of power relations with the government. As one informant said: "The present 'umda and the one before him were from Bait Bu Taram of 'Ailit Lazuni, and the next one will be from Bu Taram also."

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The tenacity of traditional politics and the influence of the "status group" are reflected in the affairs surrounding the election of a new incumbent to the office of 'umda. In this situation, all Bedouins become concerned more with the distribution of power than with the actual person who will fill the authority role. One informant, an 'aqila, gave indication that formal authorities support the "status group" and the distribution of power which they represent and maintain.

Mustafa, the brother of the 'umda, takes his place while he is in Cairo attending Parliament. The 'umda told me that he was going to ask the 'awaaqil to sacrifice (i.e. slaughter a lamb) and write a paper making Mustafa the new 'umda. (Here I told the informant that I had spoken with Mustafa about this, and he told me that he did not want to be the 'umda). Even if Mustafa does not want to be the 'umda, the 'awaaqil will force him to accept . . . It should remain in the same family, it would be a shame if the office went to another family. Mustafa's father and brother were 'umda before him. If the office left the family,

⁵Technically, the 'Aishaibat were without an 'umda while I was in the field. However, he spent enough time in Matruh that he was able to carry on his duties until his successor could be named.

124 If the office left the family,

* 613 all of the lineages would be fighting over it . . . The
• 634 job should stay in Bait Bu Taram; if this is impossible,
571 then it should stay in 'Allit Lazumi. In any case, the
666 'awaagil will decide.
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634 A change in the present locus of legal authority in
178 the Bedouin-Egyptian government structural relationship
121 would amount to a re-structuring process, and could lead to
serious conflict. In the very least, it would call for a
clear explanation and new statement of social reality since
it would challenge what is, and "has always been" a legitimate
distribution of power and political order.

634 The office of the shaikh is not a potential power-
554 base by comparison with the office of 'umda. The shaikh,
rather than being in direct communication with the Governor,
executes the official orders made known to the 'umda. As an
administrator, he takes care of issuing drivers' licenses,
notifies men of their military draft status, etc. The govern-
ment sees this as a necessary post because of the difficulty
of contacting Bedouins deep in the desert. In one sense, the
shaikh's office is becoming less functional as the Bedouin
move in from the desert and begin to take part in the national
society, but in another sense it is becoming more functional
as bureaucracy and red tape become increasingly complex. But
the shaikh remains in the shadow of the 'umda. He never
substitutes for the 'umda, for this would infringe on the
rightful power of the 'umda's family; when the 'umda is absent,

634 his brother sits in his place.

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The present shaikh is a member of 'Ailit Ma'fas, and

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this is to offset the fact that the office of 'umda is in 'Ailit Lazumi. It reflects the need to distribute official power and to symbolize the real power structure. Historically, the Lazumi were more powerful than the Ma'fas. These two lineages are the largest, wealthiest, and most influential in al-Qasr and among the 'Aishaibat. When the present shaikh's father decided to retire due to old age, he requested that his son be allowed to take up his role. The 'awaagil of the 'Aishaibat in al-Qasr approved this "nomination" and the son was "elected." It is a fact that the shaikh's father is the richest man among the members of the 'Ailit Ma'fas and that the 'umda's father was the richest man of 'Ailit Lazumi.

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Power groups tend to interact so as to enhance not the official authority structure but the political status quo (Peters 1967:279). This explains a practice of the "status group" which Max Weber referred to as "connubism," the tendency of the members of this group to exchange women among themselves. In Figure 10,¹ the marriages of 'Ait Abd al-Malik of Bait 'Umar of 'Ailit Ma'fas show that out of seventeen marriages only four of these were within the 'Aishaibat, and that three out of four of these marriages were with 'Ailit Lazumi. Even more impressive is the information obtained from considering I, [See p. 132--Analyst]

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582 all of the marriages in the history of 'Ailit Ma'fas (see Table 1).² From a total of 197 marriages, 33 were within the 'Aishaibat tribe. Of these 33 marriages with the other lineages of al-Qasr (see Figure 3 for the lineages of al-Qasr), 2 were with 'Ailit Abu Qarasa, and 2 with 'Ailit Zallat, 4 each were with 'Ailit Zagharat, 'Ailit Dawlat, and 'Ailit Shraif, but 17, or just over 50 per cent, were with 'Ailit Lazumi.

• 634
554 For the time being, the offices of 'umda and shaikh seem to be modern symbols of the traditional power structure rather than loci of real power, though this does not preclude their becoming so in the future. But for the present, these roles are considered "not of the people, not of the desert, they belong to the government." Here is the way one 'aqila explained it:

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The 'umda is higher in the government but the 'aqila is the responsible one in the 'aiela. The shaikh has nothing to do with 'awaqil, he only makes contact between them and the government . . . The 'umda gets the request from the government and asks the 'awaqil to handle the situation, but he does not tell them how to do it . . . The 'umda and shaikh go to meetings with the Governor, then they tell the 'awaqil about the matters discussed. There is no direct contact between the Governor and the 'awaqil . . . The 'umda comes to the 'awaqil concerning general problems . . . If the Arabs need something from the government, they go to the 'umda. They tell him to go and tell the Governor what they want . . . The 'umda represents them and he does good in this. God only knows if he is doing a good job. If he is not it will show in the next election.

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From the standpoint of the political system of al-Qasr, we might conclude that the 'umda and shaikh are roles 1. [This should read Table 5. See p.115--Analyst]

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554 of little significance in the authority structure. Very few
people of the al-Qasr area have had any contact with these
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554 officers, and very few want any contact. On the other hand,
178 the direction of change in al-Qasr and the bureaucratic growth
of the government in the Western Desert makes it likely that
all Bedouins will be drawn into the total authority structure,
and that the roles of 'umda and shaikh will expand. These
roles will not increase in terms of traditional prestige and
status, but they may gain the authority which they do not possess
now. This is in view of the fact that the traditional authority
structure remains relatively intact. The 'umda and the
shaikh have no traditional basis of authority, so they cannot
make decisions which are morally binding for Bedouins of al-
Qasr at this time. It is obvious, of course, that the 'umda
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635 may refer to the Governor, and even the use of governmental
554 force, as the basis of his legitimacy. But this has never
178 happened. The incumbent 'umda is still a Bedouin, and this
prevents him from challenging the traditional ways. Also,
the Governor is concerned with restricting the 'umda's
influence not increasing it.

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613 I do not mean to imply that there is, or will be, a
178 struggle for power between traditional authority represented
578 by the 'agila and modern legal authority represented by the
'umda. Such a struggle could not actually occur since when,
and if, the 'umda came to represent authority in a newly

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structured situation the traditional authority structure
would have disappeared from the scene.

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But, there is a struggle for authority recognition
going on in al-Qasr. It is related to the change from the
old basis of traditional authority to a new basis of legal
authority. At the heart of this struggle is the role of the
rajal khair. The rajal khair has a firm public basis for
establishing himself in an authoritative and representative
role. Traditionally, the rajal khair has faced inward and
outward: he has used his ascribed position on the al-Qasr
prestige scale to augment his status and influence, and, at
the same time, his economic rationality has oriented him
toward Marsa Matruh. In the present stage of culture change,
[648] the rajal khair is in a position to combine his ascribed and
achieved attributes to gain entrance to a new reference group,
the Egyptian bureaucracy. This offers him a new kind of
prestige as well as affording him new opportunities for power,
and even authority, over his fellow Bedouins.

The rajal khair, in view of his movement between the
old and new in Egypt, maintains a tertium quid status in
two camps. While he has one foot in the traditional community
because of his role in conflict regulation and the manipulation
of traditional values, the rajal khair also has a foot in the

198 modern camp. He has been able to enter into dialogue with
554 modernizing agents because his intra-tribal "status honor"
627 renders him public recognition at the institutional level,
and because his worldly style of life allows him to, in part,
identify with a modern reference group.

554 The 'agila and the 'umda might be seen as the two
198 extremes of a temporary and emerging authority structure for
634 the Bedouin of al-Qasr: the traditional authority bound to
*613 the old moral order, and the modern legal authority identified
wholly with an, as of yet, outside political and moral order.

[627] Ideally, it seems that only the rajal khair, who is neither an
'agila nor an 'umda, is in the structural and ideological
position to assume leadership and to guide the Bedouins during
this period of culture change.

121 fully organized government behind the role, the element of
554 force may enter into the rajal khair style of domination.
627 Thus far, the 'umda and the shaikh roles have functioned
• [634] through the traditional roles of the 'aqila and the rajal
* [613] khair, that is, the "status group." In the future, this pattern
[78] may change. It is also possible that new roles will emerge.

This is what I wish to explore.

121 The "status group" of al-Qasr operating with a sense
571 of identity with a modern reference group deem themselves
554 responsible for making decisions on the behalf of "the people"
or "the Bedouin." Members of the "status group" would
[177] occasionally dress in Western clothes; they would hunt gazelle
for sport; they owned the few autos there were in the area;
and a few partook of alcoholic beverages. Their rights and
obligations in social relations are still relatively stable
and depend on the ascribed values of al-Qasr Bedouin society,
but one can detect the start of a power struggle within the
group. It is a competitive desire for social mobility and
is stated in terms of the achieved attributes considered
important by the reference group to which they aspire, the
Egyptian society. For example, one sometimes heard the com-
plaint from various members of the "status group" that the
Governor was not giving proper recognition to those "who
understood the ways of the Bedouin," and "those who could
speak for the Bedouin."

156 than the Awlad 'Ali societal level. In the traditional
554 system, his influence and power have been informal, and,
121 although this has been advantageous over against the formal
role of 'aqila, his political activity was ultimately limited
by this structural differentiation and definition of authority.

(177) In gaining access to the bureaucratic structure of Egyptian
officialdom with its firm allocation of rights and duties,
Hajj 'Ali could operate as an authority within the total authority
structure which has reference to both the internal and external
political relational systems of al-Qasr.

Practical Application

*613 In al-Qasr, the two most influential and powerful
lineages, 'Ailit Lazumi and 'Ailit Ma'fas, each have a
•(634) "most powerful bait." We have noted that in 'Ailit Lazumi
it is Bait Bu Taram which controls the office of 'umda: in
*613 'Ailit Ma'fas it is Bait 'Umar which has Hajj 'Ali. Hajj 'Ali
159 is fifty three years old. He has married five times, divorced
581 one wife, and at present has four wives. Whatever his motives
156 for these marriages, at least some of them have obviously
[595] been made as economic and political moves. A check on his
wives' tribal origins will show this. In each case, Hajj
'Ali's wife is from a lineage which holds land contiguous to
his own property in the 'izba sector of al-Qasr. The one
exception to this is a marriage contracted to establish ties

156 He was sometimes
159 asked to sit-in as a witness for important contractual
554 matters. Note that in the rawaabit al-'awaqil of Bait
675 Shafaila of 'Ailit Lazumi (presented in Chapter Four),
Hajj 'Ali who is neither from 'Ailit Lazumi nor an 'aqila
was present to sign and validate this document.

156 Hajj 'Ali, then, operates in the micropolitical
159 system and the traditional authority structure of al-Qasr.
554 But what is just as important, he has secured a firm foot-
hold in the modern bureaucratic structure of the near-by
town. He straddles both camps. The Governor of Marsa Matruh
635 was an important aid to my understanding of Hajj 'Ali's
634 role as "broker." The Governor claimed that the British
156 first introduced the roles of 'umda and shaikh; they did this
159 to "control the Bedouin" and to "get the men out of the tents."
554 He explained in his own way what he considered to be the
124 structural differentiation of political roles in al-Qasr.
[648]

* [43] Let me tell you, these fellows are very clever. They
have an 'umda . . . he comes to my office and says:
"I want this and this." I say, "No." Then he goes
back to the 'awaqil and tells them that, and then
these fellows begin to think in what way they can get
what they want. But the 'umda is nothing; it is the
'aqila whom the Bedouins listen to and love . . . The
'umda is elected (at this time) by the Bedouins. They
put forward a man who hesitates, one who can say yes
or no . . . But there is a real leader for the people,
this is a man such as Hajj 'Ali, here is a man the
Bedouins love.

124 The Governor said that Hajj 'Ali speaks well and
635 thinks well. Twice in the interview the Governor said that
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[648] population of the whole Western Desert, and representatives
of the Egyptian government employees working in the province.

• [634] The Bedouin representatives appointed to this council need
not be an 'umda or a shaikh, although they may be. The
oldest Bedouin member of the council, who happens to be an
'umda, told me that "the Governor picks the men who he feels
understand the problems of the people."

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* 613 The Governor himself thinks that every Bedouin on
his council is an 'aqila. He replied to my question about
the criteria for membership on the Majlis al-Muhafza: "I
am using a new selection system. Rather than choose the
'umda or shaikh, I choose the 'aqila. Every man on the
council is an 'aqila, and the number is determined by the
population of the area . . . But I appoint more men from the

[619] 'Ali Ahmar (see Figures 3 and 7)¹ than from other tribes.
This is because they are more numerous, and they are near
Matruh where I am able to contact them immediately. The
'Ali Ahmar are represented by six men and the other tribes
by just three men."

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[114] Hajj 'Ali is one of these six men and the only member
of the Council who resides in al-Qasr. I attended and ob-
served the December meeting of the Council. The Governor
sat at the head of a long table with the Egyptian representa-
tives on either side of him. At the other end of the table
sat the Bedouin representatives, Hajj 'Ali among them. Purely
1. [See pp. 65 & 77 respectively--Analyst]

156 by the secretary of the cooperative society who requested
159 that the government furnish bus service between Matruh and
554 al-Qasr. The Governor thought this a good idea and said he
635 would inquire into the matter.
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156 As the Governor suggested that the meeting be adjourned,
159 Hajj 'Ali stood up, faced the Governor and began another of
554 his formal speeches in the rich tradition of Arabic; it was
635 the best Arabic I had heard spoken in the desert. This speech
177 was for the benefit of all present, Bedouins and officials
537 alike. Hajj 'Ali made no requests but simply thanked the
Governor for honoring al-Qasr with his presence. In this
short well-prepared tribute, he said:

We feel the efforts of the government and we can
scarcely imagine or dream of this development.
For instance, we were living in tents and now
only five per cent remain in tents while the
remainder are in houses. We were dressed simply,
but now we are dressed in poplin material. Those
who could afford one set of clothes now can afford
two. Thanks be to God, all this is due to Jamal Abd
al-Nasser.

156 It is significant, of course, that smiles once again
159 played on the faces of the Governor's entourage and nothing
554 but admiration on the faces of the Bedouins. As Hajj 'Ali
635 spoke he did not face the Governor directly but turned aside,
537 speaking both to him and the Bedouins--Hajj 'Ali, the Bedouin,
had been sitting on the ground before the Governor. The
•[634] 'umda and shaikh had accompanied the Governor on his tour

156 and they sat on chairs inside the tent. I returned to
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554 Marsa Matruh in the 'umda's car (1964 Ford, highly polished)
535 with the 'umda and the shaikh. They openly joked about Hajj
531 'Ali and his manner of presentation; they repeated some of
634 his "stilted" phrases and laughed. Hajj 'Ali gave last year's
222 reception speech also. This is because, his son says, Hajj
522 'Ali is considered a fine speaker by the Bedouins of al-Qasr.

121 We can see how these details carry larger implications
177 within the context of political and social structures under-
178 going change. It is the stuff which the anthropologist finds
important for an understanding of the process of change.

156 If I have established thus far that Hajj 'Ali is
159 politically active and representative in both the traditional
554 and the modern systems, then the attempt is now to prove that
177 he consciously seeks to change the traditional in the direction
178 of the modern for political and moral reasons, and for social
and personal reasons.

156 Hajj 'Ali, when he spoke with me, inevitably came
159 around to the subject of international politics, whether this
554 was the question of Israel or the image which America's racial
177 problems presented. Hajj 'Ali was the only man from the whole
178 Marsa Matruh area who was neither shaikh nor 'umda to attend
824 the nomination of Jamal Abd al-Nasser in January of 1965. In
571 all of this, I detect a move on the part of Hajj 'Ali to
identify himself with an Egyptian reference group and to

156 undertaken to transform his rajal khair role into an authority
159 which transcends the bounds of the local community. During
554 my talks with him, he never once insinuated that the people
829 of al-Qasr, nor even the 'Aishaibat or 'Ali Almar (terms
178 he rarely ever used), owe anything to a larger entity or
community known as "the Bedouin" or "the Awlad 'Ali."
If Hajj 'Ali is to legitimate his own authority in a new
political system, he must, at the same time, show the Bedouins
the legitimacy of the new political community. The Bedouins
829 must feel a moral commitment toward the new national political
178 community or else it has no meaning or authority. Most of the
177 Bedouins of al-Qasr still take it for granted that the allocation
of political values and distribution of power in terms of
traditional and modern legal roles will be carried over into
the modern community and its politics. Hence, if anyone should
go on to Cairo to represent the Bedouin of the Western Desert,
• (634) naturally it should be the 'umda or the shaikh "who knew how
(648) to deal with the Egyptians." The majority of the people of
the al-Qasr area see change coming but do not conceptualize
it as any threat to the traditional authority structure.

156 Hajj 'Ali anticipates the change as fundamental
159 enough to require a new sense of identity. I think this is
554 evident in the following statement in which he takes issue
829 with the traditional way of doing things and appears to be
178 preparing himself for a role in the readjustment process.
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156 tional style of Bedouin hospitality--"as we used to do in
159 Cyrenaica"--and spent a total of 50 L.E. for the welcoming
554 ceremony. "This money was from his own pocket," as the
829 Bedouins of al-Qasr complained after it was learned that
574 the vice-President would not visit Matruh after all. As
648 a matter of fact, all of the Bedouin leaders who had been
invited to the reception by Hajj 'Ali refused to eat the
food, for they said that it had not been prepared for them.
[976] This act was taken as a show of respect for Hajj 'Ali and
anger with bureaucrats.

156 Hajj 'Ali is the representative of al-Qasr to the
159 Arab Socialist Union which meets in Marsa Matruh and has
554 cell meetings in al-Qasr. The socialist cell in al-Qasr
648 meets about three times a month. When I asked why Hajj 'Ali
668 was the man chosen to represent all of al-Qasr at section
[124] meetings of the Union, the reply was: "Because he is a member
[635] of the Majlis al-Muhafza." There was one section meeting
of the Union in Matruh while I was in the field. The theme
of the meeting was "The Meaning of Socialism." Hajj 'Ali
attended this meeting.

156 In sum, it seems not too far afield to say that Hajj
159 'Ali is prepared to take over the leadership of the Bedouins
554 in a much more sophisticated manner than one could possibly
expect from the traditional style of politics. Hajj 'Ali's
● [634] comments about the 'umda and the 'umda's probable successor

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imply that he feels they are not really equipped to represent their traditional constituency. Hajj 'Ali, as everyone in al-Qasr knows, is traditional and modern at the same time. It seems that he has only alienated those whom he threatens and those who are a threat to him, i.e., the 'umda and the shaikh.

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He may not be educated, but he knows the 'awaiyid; at the same time he stresses the fact that his son will have the education which he never had. Empathy is a primary trait of the charismatic leader and the "cultural broker" who seeks to manipulate social relations. No one could explain to me why Hajj 'Ali did not have an education while his brother (who is only three years younger) and other members of the "status group" do read and write. He perhaps only became concerned in the period of change. Hajj 'Ali, the "cultural broker," is more politically conscious and creative within the context of two worlds in change.

657 full-time employment with the government projects in the area and
178 settle in fairly permanent houses near the place of work.
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657 With the movement toward settling down, the relative legal and
701 political autonomy which Awlad Ali once enjoyed is breaking down. This
642 was reflected first in the loss of military exemption. In 1947, the
draft law was applied to all tribal populations in Egypt, including
Awlad Ali. The application is not seriously enforced, however, due
to the fact that births are still not recorded in the area. In 1954,

657 the "omda" or mayorship system practiced in the rural areas of Egypt
634 was extended to the Western Desert with certain modifications to fit
177 the tribal organization of populations in the area. This put a strain
on the native system of leadership, a point which will be covered in

657 later chapters. Finally, and along with the extension of the omda sys-
692 tem, the jurisdiction of the legal system of the state was extended
177 over the area. This resulted in a duality in the judicial process.
178 The tribal law, with its traditional tribal mediators, is still func-

tioning side by side with the modern court system of the state law. In
many cases, especially in criminal cases, the individual is tried under
both systems, and sometimes receives two different judgments for the
same offense. Various efforts are being made to minimize the effects
of this duality. In civil cases, the problem does not seem serious,
since it is the parties themselves, or one of them, who voluntarily
bring the case to the attention of the legal authorities. Therefore,
they can choose between the traditional legal system and the modern courts
of law. So far, civil cases are brought to the modern court system only
when the native procedures fail to achieve a settlement. As such, the

613 His success in solving disputes between members
628 of his baits and outsiders might enhance his prestige within the bait,
554 but it is not a substitute for patrilineal succession as the basis of
[428] the Aqila's authority. But in less integrated baits the situation is
[627] different. The ineffectiveness of the Aqila in solving disputes may
lead members of his bait to seek another man as their representative who
would act as a mediator in their behalf. If this continues for a long
time the Aqila might find himself with no functions and the new person
would become a de facto Aqila.

613 The Aqila represents the only effective indigenous form of leader-
554 ship among Awlad Ali at the present time. The camp headman provides
622 another form of leadership on the camp level, but, as mentioned before,
the leadership of the headman is very limited and involves minimal
authority. In addition to the indigenous leadership represented by the
634 Aqila, there is the superimposed administrative structure of the govern-
622 ment representative in the form of the "omda" system introduced into the
656 area by the government decree no. 1187 of 1958. The system of omda or
197 mayorship is essentially that applied to the rural areas of Egypt with
certain modifications to fit the tribal organization and the semi-nomadic
existence of the populations of the Western Desert. In rural areas, the
622 omda is the administrative head of the village. He is appointed by the
[554] government from among the village inhabitants who have certain qualifi-
[212] cations with regard to education (must be able at least to read and
[556] write), wealth (own at least 5 feddans of land in the area), and sound
reputation. As such, the omda system in the rural areas is a territorial
system. The omda's authority covers the territory of the village and
all individuals living in it regardless of their kinship affiliation.

622 His main function is to manage the affairs of the village, apprehend
554 criminals, report and register births and deaths, collect taxes and
represent the government in all matters involving the relationship be-
tween the government and his village. Because of his position as the
[66] representative of the government, he usually enjoys a considerable
amount of power which, over the years, many omdas have used it to obtain
personal benefits.

361 In 1958 the committee appointed for the examination of the possi-
631 bility of applying the system to Awlad Ali noticed that villages in the
sense of a compact settlement similar to that existing in the rural area
simply do not exist in the Western Desert region. There are a few
settled communities in the area but they are scattered homes or a few
stores. These communities have no identifiable boundaries or adminis-
trative existence. The area as a whole is divided into ten adminis-
trative districts, each having a police station. These districts cor-
respond to the old Senusia Zawyas which played an important role in
maintaining order in the era until the First World War. Until that time
the area was divided into fourteen zones each of which was under the
jurisdiction of one of the zawyas. The zawyas were mainly religious
centers, or shrines, inhabited and directed by a member of the Senusi
order of Cyrenaica. The role of the head of the zawya was to teach the
Qoraan and spread the teachings of the Senusi order. One of the ways
the zawyas attracted followers was through distribution of food and
clothing to those who joined it. The zawyas also provided places of
refuge for those who needed protection since no one could force his way
into the sacred zawyas. Because of their religious position which put

795 Because of their religious position which put
175 them outside the tribal structure, the leaders of the zawyas played a
627 significant role in mediation and settling disputes between various tri-
793 bal segments. At their disposal was their ability to ostracize anyone
[626] who did not abide by their decision from the zawyas, which meant depriv-
ing him from all the benefits, social as well as religious, that member-
ship in the zawyas offered.

795 After the First World War when the British replaced the Turks as
175 governors of the area, the zawyas were closed and the religious leaders
177 ordered to leave. The zoning established by the zawyas existed, however,
[648] and was used as the basis for the redistricting of the area. Police
[631] stations replaced the religious centers. From the standpoint of the tri-
[625] bal population itself, the districts have no psychological or political
619 reality. The zawyas were originally established in the areas of tribal
[795] concentrations. But the area itself did not have any political identity.
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The only reality from the standpoint of the inhabitants was the tribal
reality and affiliation which cut across many of these districts. Many
of the tribal segments inhabiting one district were and still are hostile
to one another. To transform the zones into administrative districts and
177 to establish one office of leadership for the whole district was to im-
634 pose a political unity nonexistent among the tribal segments inhabiting
619 the district. To avoid this difficulty, the government supplemented the
[622] territorial principle of the omda system in the rural area with the prin-
ciple of tribal representation and came up with a system which seems to
suite the situation in the Western Desert. For each of the districts,
a list of all tribal segments which habitually occupy the area and whose
tribal land is located within the district, is made. The most powerful

554 The most powerful
177 and numerous segments are then represented by the omda, and the lesser
634 ones are represented by a sheikh. Unlike the system in the rural areas
619 where the sheikh is a subordinate to the omda, the sheikh in the Western
622 Desert does not occupy the same position. Instead he has the same func-
tions and occupies, with regard to his tribal segment, the same position
the omda occupies with regard to his. He does not take orders from the
omda and has direct relations with the administration. Sheikhs and omdas
from one district are supposed to meet periodically in the police station
and discuss with the police officer in charge of the station matters con-
cerning the district and their own tribal groups. The only difference
between the omda and the sheikh in the Western Desert seems to be the
label of the office. The label itself carries a certain amount of pre-
stige to the tribal segment represented by the omda, since it is an ac-
knowledgegment by the government of its importance. This is why many of
the tribal segments try to be represented by an omda rather than by a
sheikh. In certain districts where two or more strong tribal segments
compete for the honor of being represented by an omda, the district may
have two or more omdas representing the strong tribal segments and a num-
ber of sheikhs representing the lesser tribal groups in the district.
Not every tribal segment in a district is represented by an omda or even
a sheikh, however. Very small tribal segments may join together and have
one sheikh, while others may agree to be represented by one of the larger
segment's sheikh or omda.

634 Obviously, the number of omdas and sheikhs differ from one district
554 to another depending on the number of important tribal segments in each.
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657 There is no specific rule whereby a certain tribal segment is considered

634 by the government to be significant enough to be represented. This matter
554 is left almost entirely to the ability of members of a given tribal seg-
619 ment to convince the authorities that their group is sizable enough to
657 give them the right of omda, or at least sheikh's representation. A seg-
ment represented by a sheikh may later ask for an omda because of the
prestige involved. It is worth noting in this respect that the various
tribal segments in the area are eager to be represented in the govern-
ment administrative structure. Gaining prestige among the other tribal
segments is only one motive for such eagerness. Unlike the omda in the
[622] rural areas who functions mainly as a representative of the government
to the village, the omda or sheikh in the Western Desert is a represen-
tative of the people to the government. This is not a theoretical diff-
erence but involves a real difference in the relation of the government
and the omda, on the one hand, and between the latter and the people
his represnets, on the other. The omda in the village is a symbol of
622 authority to his people. He is the undisputed ruler of the village. His
554 authority is backed by his ability to mobilize and use the force put at
657 his diposal by the government, in the implementation of his decisions.
Since he is appointed by the government and not elected by the people,
he does not have to rely on his popularity to hold or maintain office.
His main concern is to please the government, rather than the people of
the village to whom he is merely a symbol of authority. There is very
little that the village omda can bring to his people form the outside,
while he has to implement government policies, collect taxation, appre-
hend criminals, all tasks which the villagers are not eager to have done.

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The situation is quite different in the Western Desert. Although it is the government, represented by the province council, which makes the final decision in appointing the omda or sheikh, yet this appointment is made on the basis of nominations given by the gribal segment or segments which he would represent. Since the tribal segment usually nominates one person, the decision of the council is limited to the examination of the credentials of the nominee and to see if he meets the basic requirements of the law. If a certain nominee is rejected by the council, a very rare occurrence, the matter goes back to the tribal segment to make another nomination. In practice, then, the omda of the Western Desert is elected by the people and the appointment by the government of the omda is significant only in cases where the omda is to represent more than one small tribal segment and each nominates one. Here the council has to choose between the various nominees and appoints the best qualified. Unlike the omda of the village, the tribal omda is a real representative of his people. Despite the fact that he becomes part of a governmental structure, his basic function is to look after the interest of his tribal group. Or, as one informant put it, "The omda is the servant of the people." In many cases the best interest of the tribal segment is served through full cooperation of the omda with the government. So far there seems to be very little conflict between the interest of the tribal populations and that of the government. There is very little in the area that the government demands or needs. There is no taxable land to speak of. There are only a few acres of barley land and even these are minimally taxed. The main responsibility of the omda to the government is to report births and deaths and give a yearly list of young men

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634 who reach the age of military service. He is also supposed to report
554 the presence of any fugitive or criminal in his district and report
657 crimes occurring in that district and which involve members of the tribal
segment he represents.

634 The first two duties of the omda to the government do not involve
554 any conflict of interest. Unlike the rural areas where sons are con-
657 sidered a very important economic asset to their parents, and therefore,
562 there is a general resentment of military service which takes the sons
761 away and deprives the parents of their important work around the fields,
178 Awlad Ali look at military service as

1 On the basis of one percent of the yearly yield.

an opportunity to have their sons go to the city, obtain guaranteed pay-
ment, and escape the hardship of nomadic existence. Economic activities
[233] in the area do not require the cooperation of a large number of individ-
uals, and most of the grazing of animals is done either by a paid shep-
herd or by one of the grown-up sons. Although there still exists an
[183] ideology which values having many sons, yet with the cessation of hostil-
ities between the tribal segments, their presence in the area has lost its
[464] value. Many of the younger generation are seeking jobs with the govern-
ment projects in the area or in the city. Neither one is easy to find.
Joining the army is increasingly considered as an easy alternative.

634 The omda's function which seems to involve some conflicting loyalties
554 is that of reporting crimes involving members of his tribal segment. But
657 even this does not pose a serious problem as it might seem. Almost all
674 minor crimes committed against property or persons as well as all civil
disputes are left to be handled by the tribal proceedings. The duties of
the omda are limited to reporting the cases of murder and serious assault

• 634 which result in permanent bodily harm. Reporting such cases is a fairly
554 minor proceeding since such cases come to the knowledge of the authori-
657 ties through other channels, mainly from talks involved in the mediation
674 for the bloodmoney or from the hospital to which serious assault cases
[743] are usually taken. Besides, reporting a crime does not mean convicting
the offender. This latter depends on evidence which, in case the dis-
pute has been settled by tribal proceedings, is hard for the police au-
thorities to find.

634 While the government demands do not impose serious conflicts of
554 loyalty on the part of the omda, if successful, his position with the
657 government can bring to his tribal segments great benefits. These bene-
fits are usually in the form of various social and economic aids in-
cluding fodder for the animals and food and clothing for the people
during the dry years. Other benefits including providing the tribal
population with olive trees and helping them clear many of the old Roman
wells and establishing wind mills for nominal fees. Not everyone in the
area can have such benefits. Some do not even know they exist. A success-
ful omda could manipulate the administration to get as many benefits for
his tribal segment as possible.. Some successful omdas were able to have
[871] the government build schools in their districts, establish cooperative
[474] units to market local products such as wool, sheep, and olive oil.

634 This should not lead us, however, to conclude that the position of
554 the omda in the Western Desert does not involve any kind of conflicting
657 loyalty or that he is always supported by his people or even trusted by
578 them. One informant said that the omda of his biat is "...government
man, not ours....He would sell us all if this pleases his masters in the

634 government." But due to the nature of the representation and the spe-
554 cific relation of the government to the area, the position of the omda
657 does not pose serious demands upon the loyalty of the omda to his tribal
[578] group.

634 Because of the omda's ability to bring benefits to his tribal seg-
554 ment from the government, the ability to manipulate the administrative
657 officials is the most important basis for the nomination of a given
666 individual for the position of the omda. "The omda is one who can
speak city talk and knows how to deal with the government officials."
Age is not important; young people know more about city ways than old
people. "A man may be a cheat, but as long as he can get our things
done, he is the best man for the job...of course, we don't want to
nominate someone with a bad reputation who may blacken our face in
front of everybody. However, if he has a bad reputation the council
would not approve his appointment...he just has to be someone who can
get things done..."

159 Muftah Mughaleb, the sheikh of the Sanagrah tribal segment in the
634 district of Heman, described the circumstances of his nomination as
554 follows:

657 Before the former sheikh of that tribal segment died (he
666 was Muftah's uncle), one member of the group got into an argu-
578 ment with the police officer in charge of the police station in
625 the district. The tribesman insulted the police officer who in-
sisted on arresting him. Rumors also had it that the police
officer was using his authority to reduce the share of the tribal
segment in the government aid which was badly needed during that
particular year. Sheikh Muftah, whose father is the Aqila of

159 bait Mughaleb of the Sanagrah tribe, went to the officer and apol-
634 ogized to him on behalf of the whole group and invited him to a
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657 lavish dinner party. The charges against the tribesman were soon
666 dropped, and it was concluded that it was because of the way Muftah
[578] had handled the situation. Since that incident, Muftah has been
[625] known as an expert in handling the government officials. One year
later, the sheikh of the tribal segment died, and a meeting was
held during which the important members of the Sanagrah tribal
segment in the district decided to nominate Muftah for the posi-
tion of the sheikh, vacant by the death of his uncle. Muftah, who
was attending the meeting, was asked to accept the nomination, and
he agreed. "...I accepted the nomination reluctantly." Muftah
later told me, "I did not really want to become the sheikh. The
159 position does not bring any personal benefit, and it involves a
634 lot of responsibility. The sheikh has to act as an attorney for
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657 his tribe, represent it to the government and competes with other
sheikhs to bring his people things that the other sheikhs cannot
get for theirs, like more membership in the cooperative units or
in the socialist union. And what does he get in return? Nothing...
not even the gratitude of his people. To them, he is a servant of
the tribe, and his duty is to look after its interest. If he
doesn't, then everybody is quick to criticize him. I had to ac-
cept the nomination because I felt it was my duty to do so and not
to embarrass the awaql and the important people of the tribe who
[465] put their confidence in me. As far as the government, all I get is
six pounds a month."

634 "The omda or sheikh is both a blessing and a curse to his tribe,"
554 said one member of the Aggary 'eila. "He can bring benefits to his
619 tribe, but at the same time, he has to report his own people if one of
them breaks the city laws... His position is like that of a double-
edged razor."

Most of the people in the area, however, tolerate the negative
aspects of the omda's functions as a moderate price for the possible
benefits they may get through his position. This is why each tribal
segment does its best to be represented by an omda, or at least by a
sheikh.

Within his tribal segment he enjoys a great deal of respect. He
does not, by means of position alone, command any power over members of
his group similar to the power the omda of the village has over his
people. It seems, however, that although the position itself does not
[613] carry with it any power, yet, when the holder of that position is at
the same time a native tribal leader or aqila, it tends to enhance his
position as a tribal leader and to give him more respect among members
of his tribal unit as well as among the rest of the tribal groupings.

634 This may be explained by the fact that the establishment of the omda
554 system in that area did not involve direct interference with the native
619 political system except in a minimal way, mainly to keep the tribal
182 populations in the area from interfering in the progress of various
657 government projects in the area. As such, the system did not impose
613 too many demands upon the tribal loyalties of the omdas or sheikhs.
In the relationship between the government and the tribal population,
the balance so far has been in favor of the latter, who, by means of

634 omada representation, are taking from the government much more than
554 they are giving in return. Being the link between his people and
619 the government in such a system gives the sqila a new basis of
182 political support.
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581 are necessary for the validation of the marriage contract. Modern
585 legal systems which took as their basis the Islamic law of marriage
671 and the family further required the registration of the marriage con-
675 tract for the marriage to be legal.

584 The request and necessary response forming the marriage are sup-
585 posed to be carried on by the parties involved. However, if either the
429 groom or the bride is not of age, or is mentally unqualified, the trans-
573 action is carried on by his or her guardian, or "wakil." The wakil is
the father, unless he is dead or an invalid, in which case the brothers
become the wakils. If the person has no brothers, then the uncles be-
come the wakil in the order stated. According to certain Sunni sects
in Islam, a woman marrying for the first time is always represented by
her wakil, even if she is of age. The assumption is that a woman who
has never been married does not have the experience that enables her to
enter into any kind of legally binding relationship such as marriage.

585 Following the original Islamic idea, marriage among Awlad Ali is
675 an oral agreement between the groom or his father and the guardian
593 (wakil) of the bride-to-be (her father, if alive, or her closest male
429 kin in the following order: her brothers, her uncles, her grandfather).
604 A religious man is sometimes asked to perform the marriage, although it
585 is not required. Some persons might invite a member of the Murabiteen
712 tribe or holy men to witness the marriage on the basis that his presence
619 gives "baraka," or blessing, to the marriage. Before the application of
718 the State legal system to the area, marriage contracts were not regis-
585 tered. In recent years, however, and with the increased mobility of
656 the tribal populations, more and more marriages are being registered in
197 the administrative districts. Still, according to the unofficial estimates,
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586 husband. In a number of cases the husband was willing to divorce the
562 woman after a promise by the man that she would pay him the mahr when
574 she got married. In most cases, however, the process costs the man a
554 considerable amount of money. Sometimes, when the woman is young and
attractive, the man finds it to his advantage to keep her as his wife,
since she will cost him no more expenses. On the other hand, the man
cannot refuse a woman the right of refuge, since to do this or to deny
her the right of hospitality will make him liable to pay kabara if she
made the refusal known publicly. On the other hand, it is prestigious
to be known in the area as a man to whom women go to be released from
their husbands. In fact, a man who acquires a reputation of getting
wives released is likely to be sought as mardī in other cases as well.

Due to the nature of his role in mediating, the woman must be care-
ful in selecting the man over whom she throws herself. These considera-
tions are manifested in the following case taken from my field notes.

(524) Hadia was forced by her father to marry a man from the same tribe who
(563) paid her father L.E. 100 as mahr. She did not want to marry him because
she was in love with someone else of whom her father did not approve.

One month after she was married, she left the tent and never came back.

586 Later, she appeared in the house of Omda Ali, the chief of another tribe,
562 and everyone knew that she had thrown herself on him. She later told me
574 why she had selected Omda Ali and not the Omda of her own tribe. "Be-
554 cause my husband works for the Omda of my own tribe, and I thought he
634 would be biased. Of course, I couldn't have gone to my father; he was
the one who forced me to marry that man. Omda Ali is very respected and
can support me... He is also rich and is known for releasing wives from
their husbands." Omda Ali called the husband in and asked him to divorce

586 his wife. The husband agreed but insisted that she pay him L.E. 300
562 (this included the mahr and the marriage expenses). The Omda tried to
574 reduce the amount but could not. He then tried to get the father to
554 pay, but the father refused. He had to pay the husband L.E. 200 of
634 his own money and promised that the rest would be paid when the woman
remarried (it would be paid from the mahr). The husband divorced Haida.
One week later she was married to her lover. I have no information
about whether or not the 100 pounds was paid.

586 In another example, Sabha was forced by her father to marry her
562 cousin (ibn 'amm). She could not live with him, so she threw herself
574 on one of the holy men in the area. The holy man convinced the hus-
554 band to divorce Sabha and then went to her father and convinced him to
792 pay back the mahr to the husband, and the case was settled. People say
(62) that both the husband and the father agreed to the demands of the holy
man because they were afraid of his supernatural curse. Sabha went
back to her father's house.

586 It is obvious from these and similar cases that the success or
562 failure of the procedure depends on the careful selection of the man
574 on whom a woman throws herself. It is also apparent from the above
554 examples that his right of refuge is resorted to only in cases where the
(574) woman cannot go to her father or to her closest kin to help her get a
divorce because he is either unable or unwilling to help her. A father
is unable to help if the husband is powerful or if he is the woman's
ibn 'amm (father's brother's son) who has, according to the tribal law,
the undisputed right to marry his bint 'amm (father's brother's daughter).
The father is usually unwilling to help his daughter if he is the one

THE TURKISH ADMINISTRATION

- *175 them a reprimand on the double count of decrease in revenue
*648 and lack of security. It was essential, therefore, to get the
651 Bedouin to pay their taxes without making too much trouble
about doing so. To this end the Turkish administrative organiza-
*175 tion was largely directed. In 1879 the *Vilayet* of Banghazi was,
*648 in matters of civil administration, finally separated from that of
631 Tripoli and in 1888 became an autonomous *sanjaq* directly
dependent on Istanbul. It was governed by a *mutasarraf*
nominated by, and directly responsible to, the Central Govern-
ment. On him depended all the officials of the Administration,
though the chief among them were appointed by the Imperial
Government. The senior officials were usually Turks. The
*175 country was divided for administrative purposes into a number
*648 of districts, each under a *qaimaqam*, except that of Banghazi,
634 which came directly under the Governor himself; and all except
the Aujila-Jalu and Kufra districts were further divided into
*175 sub-districts under mudirs. These districts and sub-districts
*648 followed tribal divisions and subdivisions as any administra-
634 tion in Cyrenaica must do, since the tribes and their sections
619 are the fundamental social departments of the country. Hence
sections of a nomadic tribe might be residing at any time in a
sub-district different to that to which they were administra-
tively attached, and even in a different district.
- *175 In his direction of the affairs of the administration, finances,
*648 and police, the Governor was assisted by an administrative
631 council composed of the chief accountant, the secretary, the
qadi, the mufti, and four elected members from the local popula-
tion. Each *qaimaqam*, nominated by the Imperial Government,
had an administrative council similarly composed. The mudirs,
nominated by the Imperial Government on the proposal of the
Governor, had no council established by statute but co-opted
tribal Shaikhs when they wanted their advice or co-operation.
In the towns there was a representative, called *mukhtar*,
elected by the property-owning citizens for each ward, and at
Banghazi and Darna there were urban councils of a simple
kind.
- *175 It was the mudir in charge of a sub-district who had direct
*648 dealings with the Bedouin tribes and the lodges of the Sanusiya
634 Order. In 1911, just before the Italian invasion, there were six
districts including Kufra, which came nominally under the

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Turkish administration in 1910, and the Banghazi district, which came directly under the Governor of Cyrenaica for administration. Attached to each district were the sub-districts shown in the list below,¹ in which the tribes attached to each sub-district are also given. The Bara'asa came under Banghazi, although they lived well to the east, for political reasons, the tribe being exceptionally rebellious.²

Districts	Sub-districts	Tribes
Banghazi (directly dependent on the Governor)	Suluq Qaminis Barsis Sidi Khalifa Slanta	'Awaqir
al-Marj	al-Marj	Bara'asa
Darna	al-Haniya al-Sallum Tubruq al-Banba al-Qubba Shahhat	'Arafa and 'Abid Darsa
Ajadabiya	Marsa Braiqa	'Abaidat
Aujila and Jalu	—	Hasa
Kufra	—	Magharba Awajila and Majabra

The administration was very slapdash by European standards. Indeed, Shaikh Muhammad 'Uthman says darkly: 'There is at Banghazi no organization, political, administrative, or financial. I say no more about this matter: it will be understood why.'³ This was, of course, an exaggeration, for however simple the administration may have been, and perhaps for that reason, it worked—with a good deal of grumbling it is true, but without undue conflict. Revenue was collected and would have exceeded the cost of the very cheap administration of the country if the proceeds of some taxes had not been sent to Istanbul. Much of this revenue came from import and export duties, but the bulk of it was derived from taxes on herds and a tenth of the harvest in kind, the collection of which was in the hands of the mudirs. It was the task of these mudirs, who were generally literate

¹ *Notizie relative al Sangiacato della Cirenaica e alle Mudirie dipendenti dal Mutassarifat di Bengasi* (Ufficio Politico Militare), 1913.

² Fabrizio Serra, *Italia e Senussia*, 1933, p. 17; idem in *La Cirenaica*, 1922-3, p. 182.

³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 59-60.

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[793] Arabs, to assess and collect taxes, to maintain security, and to control the few police allotted to them. In this task they expected co-operation from the local Shaikhs of the tribal sections and the Shaikhs of the Sanusiya lodges.

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[625] It is remarkable that the Bedouin paid any taxes at all, for the mudirs had not sufficient force at their command, nor had the Governor at Banghazi, to compel the Bedouin to pay if they were determined not to do so. The mudir of Slanta had only 50 to 60 soldiers in his sub-district and the Bara'asa whom he administered could have annihilated this force with ease, as could the 'Awaqir the 50 soldiers and the handful of police stationed at Suluq. That taxes were collected at all, and all the more that they were collected without constant disturbance, is to be accounted for partly by the recognition by the Shaikhs of the tribal sections, with whom the mudirs were careful to keep on good personal terms, that there was a moral obligation to pay them; but there were also sanctions if they were not paid. If the Shaikh of a tribal section did not collect the taxes due from that section, he was held responsible and action could be taken against him personally. The mudir, accompanied by a small armed force, went a round of the tribal sections attached to his sub-district each year, generally in springtime, and sent out other tax-collecting parties in other directions. Sometimes special tax commissions appointed by the Governor also toured the country. A favourite device was for such parties to quarter themselves in the camp of a recalcitrant Shaikh and to reside there as his guests, for the soldiers and police carried few provisions, till the tax was paid. The Shaikhs, on the other hand, were made partners in the undertaking by, besides investment with an official robe and status, receiving a percentage of the taxes collected, the mudir himself also taking a percentage. Moreover, each Shaikh whose section paid the tax was determined that the other sections should not escape paying as well. A Shaikh was able to divide up the assessment on his section among the minor Shaikhs, and the minor Shaikhs among yet smaller ones. It was in the interest of each Shaikh to see that the smaller ones did not escape their share and leave him with the responsibility for a deficit. Responsibility was in this way passed down the tribal structure. On the whole the system worked well and the Turkish officials and the Bedouin did not

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get on badly together. Each understood the other. Also there was much elasticity in the taxes which appealed to the Bedouin, who prefer to pay a heavy tax one year and lightly or not at all another year, rather than to pay a regular and inevitable tax. The assessments were seldom revised and often had little relation to the capacity of a tribal section to pay. The result was that taxes were always in arrears and in some years, or for some sections, remitted altogether. Those sections nearest the Turkish posts paid the more easily because they were the more vulnerable. Some of the more nomadic Bedouin escaped payment altogether, or at any rate for years at a stretch. It is, I think, safe to assume that the taxes actually collected over a number of years were light. Otherwise the Bedouin would not have paid them.

Perhaps the chief reason why taxes were collected without constant rebellion was the support given to the administration in this matter by the Sanusiya. The Turks held the coastal towns and a few inland posts outside which their direct control of the country was restricted to those Bedouin who lived a fairly stable life in the immediate vicinity of these centres. The rest of the country was left to the Sanusiya and its own devices, though, as we have seen, the Turks sent occasional patrols into the interior. Sporadically, without much enthusiasm or perseverance, the Administration at one time tried to extend its effective control into the hinterland by nominating to official posts, and giving arms and money to, selected tribal chiefs, such as the Shaikhly families of Hadduth, Lataiwish, and Saif al-Nasir. Bu Bakr bin Hadduth of the Bara'asa was made *qaimaqam* of al-Qaiqab, where he had a castle; 'Ali Lataiwish of the Magharba was made *qaimaqam* of Sirt, where he, also, had a castle; and the fierce old warrior chieftain of the Aulad Suliman, Saif al-Nasir, was made mudir of Bu Njaim. This procedure resulted in brigandage rather than in good administration and was in the main discarded. Instead the mudirs worked directly through the Shaikhs of the tribal sections and, especially when dealing with intertribal and intersectional affairs, through the Shaikhs of the Sanusiya zawiyas. Some of the older notables of Banghazi have told me that the Pasha, as the Governor was often called, would never have succeeded in collecting taxes among the Bedouin had it not been for the co-operation of the

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[634] Heads of the Sanusiya lodges, who often accompanied the mudirs and tax commissions to the Shaikhs of the tribal sections attached to their lodges. It was to the common interest of the Turkish Administration and of the Sanusiya that there should be order, security, justice, and trade in the country, and they co-operated to maintain them.

• The Turkish officials did their utmost to remain on good terms with the Sanusiya Shaikhs and to this end, and doubtless also because they found no difficulty in accepting, as educated men, its exalted teachings, some of them affiliated themselves to the Order. Membership of it gave them prestige in the eyes of the Bedouin as great, if not greater, than their official status gave them. Likewise the more prosperous merchants who had dealings with the Bedouin tribes or sent caravans to the Sahara and Sudan found it advisable to be received into the Order. It is for this reason that in all the towns of Libya we find a small body of the richer and more cultured citizens ascribed to the Order, while the common people belong to other or no Orders.¹

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*795 But though the administration of Cyrenaica might be called at this period a Turco-Sanusi condominium there was an undercurrent of jealousy on both sides which occasionally gave rise to open conflict. A sure occasion was any effort on the part of the Administration to tax the Sanusiya estates. Although these had been exempted from taxation by the Sultan's firman, the local administration made rare and unsuccessful efforts to exact taxation on them. When in 1908 they tried to tax the crops of the Sanusiya holdings a tribal meeting, attended by 150 Shaikhs headed by 'Umar bu Rgaia of the Darsa tribe, met at the zawiya of al-Haniya and decided not to pay any more tribute to the Turkish Government till it revoked the tax. The Government then dropped the matter, though the trouble continued till 1910. Earlier, the Governor Ahmad Pasha Zuhadi (1904-5), acting on instructions from Istanbul, had tried to impose a tax on the crops of tribesmen and zawiya's alike. The Bedouin round al-Marj had thereupon attacked a Turkish detachment charged with collecting the tax and sent them back to Banghazi stripped of everything they possessed. The outcome was that the Governor was relieved of his office.

¹ Capt. Emilio Canevari, *Zaui'e ed Ichuan Senussiti della Tripolitania*, 1917, *passim*.